

# Russian bird on first visit

■ Nicola Kalmar

A rare Russian songbird has caused a flap in the Australian bird-watching community after making a surprise visit to Broome.

The tiny Kamchatka leaf warbler was found at Broome Bird Observatory by wardens Warden Nigel and Jaime Jackett on Valentine's Day.

Mr Jackett said the visit was an exciting discovery because it marked the first time a Kamchatka leaf warbler had been seen in the country.

"The closest it's been seen is Ashmore reef which is technically Australia, but it's never been seen on the mainland of Australia."

Mr Jackett said he was first

alerted to the unexpected guest when he was inside the warden's cottage and heard an unusual birdcall from outside.

"I didn't know what it was when it was calling, I just knew it was different," he said.

"When I saw it, I instantly knew it was a type of leaf warbler ... so I ran back in the house and got my camera and iPhone, and was able to take some photos and record its song which you need to figure out what it is exactly. The leaf warblers are such a tricky group of songbirds that they often can't be identified to a particular species by appearances alone — it is their melodious voices that separate them."

The song was analysed and compared to various songs of



This tiny Kamchatka leaf warbler was found at the Broome Bird Observatory. Picture: Nigel Jackett

leaf warblers from Asia before it was identified as a Kamchatka species.

Mr Jackett said leaf warblers were generally long-distance migrants, with the Kamchatka species breeding in far eastern Russia, and migrating as far south as Indonesia.

He said the visitor would have flown 9000km to reach the Kimberley and said it may have been because its usual island destination was unsuitable. The warden said the bird, nicknamed Chuck, had attention from bird watchers Australia-wide.

## Police to target those flouting road safety rules

### BROOME BEAT

■ Sergeant Steve Kent

The Labour Day long weekend is just around the corner.

In an ongoing effort to reduce deaths on our roads, all public holidays are accompanied by a period of double demerits.

Police will actively target offences that are key contrib-

utors to fatal and serious crashes. These include drink-driving, drug-driving, careless/ reckless / dangerous driving, speeding, no authority to drive, use of mobile phones and non-use of restraints.

Double demerits will apply from 12.01am on Friday, March 4 to midnight on Monday, March 7 inclusive.

For those taking advantage of the long weekend, please make sure if you are driving and travelling long distances, take time to enjoy the drive and have regular rest breaks.

There will be a police presence on the roads in this period, so ensure that you don't speed, don't drink and drive and always wear your seatbelt.

If you are away from home

make sure you lock up and have your neighbours report anything suspicious.

For both locals and visitors to our town, make sure you lock your house, hotel rooms and ensure the windows are shut.

Doing so will reduce the likelihood of opportunistic crime within our community and not spoil your break.

## Land rezoned for Cable Beach health retreat

◀ FROM PAGE 1

Wise Earth Syndicate. Wise Earth director Garry Baverstock said the retreat would cater for a niche market for people from the international and Australian markets seeking to relax and restore their

health in unique surroundings.

"We are planning yoga and personal programs as well as education on nutrition," he said.

"Part of that will include the beautiful stretch of coastline between Cable Beach and Co-

conut Well." Mr Baverstock said the aim was to create a "low-key" experience that would allow guests to enjoy restaurants, bars and other tourism facilities that already exist in Broome.

The proposed site was bordered to the west by the Yawu-

ru Conservation Estate and unallocated crown land, creating a natural bush boundary.

Shire of Broome president Ron Johnston said the proposal ticked the right tourism boxes. "In my opinion this would be a great addition to Broome," he said.

**IMBERLEY**  
**AND TIDE GUIDE**

**IMBERLEY,**  
**AND TOUGH.**

**FUN IN THE MUD!**  
Seagrass Monitoring in Roebuck Bay



**BROOME**  
**SEAGRASS**

Did you know ?

The Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project is one of the longest running and most successful community